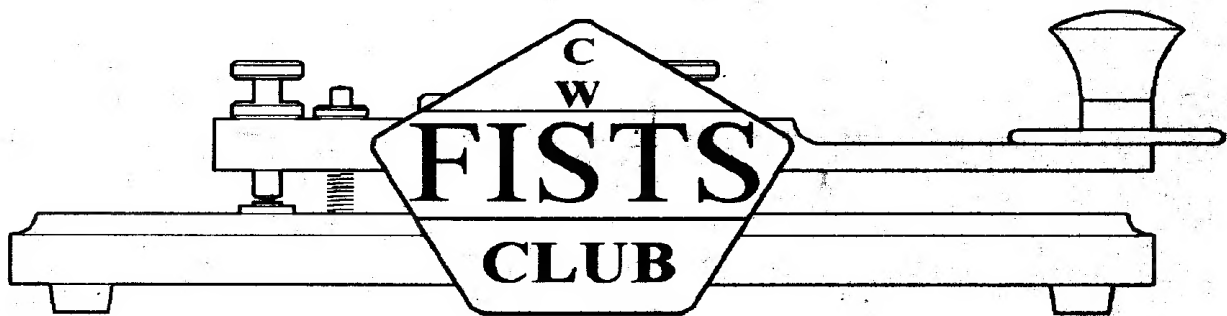


The Keynote

Newsletter of FISTS CW Club, the active chapter of the
International Morse Preservation Society

"Accuracy Transcends Speed"



- Further the use of CW
- Encourage newcomers to use CW
- Engender friendships among members

"When You've Worked A FISTS , You've Worked A Friend"

HOW DO I...

...ORDER CLUB SUPPLIES? Irene WO8E 25206 Hayes, Roseville MI 48066 has Gold logo stickers, 200 for \$5; Blue enamel/gold metal clasp-back logo pins \$3.50; Cloth logo patches 3" octagon shaped \$1.50 Rubber stamps with the FISTS logo for use with an ink pad (not included) for \$5. "I Support KNOW Code" buttons for .75 Pse make checks out to FISTS. These prices DO include first class postage. Cobalt blue w/gold FISTS logo coffee mugs are available from Joe Falcone 9614 Arden Ave, Livonia MI 48150 for \$4.50 plus \$3 postage - make checks payable to Joe Falcone.

...GET AN UP-TO-DATE MEMBERLIST? The list is printed in the KeyNote twice a year and is also on the Web page. A printed updated list may be obtained by sending \$1 (to defray costs- it's 10 pages long) to Ed N7CFA 2628 Lilac Street, Longview WA 98632.

...GET ON THE FISTS ON-LINE Email LIST? Send your Email address with your name/call/FISTS number to blafont@tir.com

...GET/SEND FISTS QSL CARDS Via BURO? Brian W8BL 3050 Rochester Rd, Dryden MI 48428 handles the Buro. Pse sort your outgoing DX and NA cards alphabetically by call area. To get cards you may have waiting, send loose stamps to Brian. He'll use them to send your cards to you.

...RENEW MY KEYNOTE SUBSCRIPTION? Send a check/money order made out to FISTS for \$15/year to Nancy WZ8C POBox 47 Hadley MI 48440

...SPONSOR A DX FISTS? DX FISTS have a separate block of numbers; their Keynote is mailed from Geo G3ZQS. Send their info to Geo 119 Cemetery Rd, Darwen Lancs, BB3 2LZ; he'll send them a DX application.

...HAVE AN APPLICATION OR NEWSLETTER SAMPLE SENT TO FRIENDS? Send their address Joe K5HLR 29 Melrose Dr, Marrero LA, 70072. Pse enclose \$1 if sample Keynote is requested.

...APPLY FOR THE CENTURY or WAS AWARD? Send a list of contacts (call, FISTS #, qth, date, band) and power used to Lee N9NVV 4530 N 15th Street Terre Haute IN 47805 Don't submit QSLs. There is no charge for awards to FISTS members, but return postage (.78) is appreciated.

...VOLUNTEER FOR or GET A CODE BUDDY? Ed WA3WSJ 775 Moonflower Reading PA 19606

...SHARE COMPUTER SOFTWARE? Joe WZ8U 5428 Bolander Grand Blanc MI 48439

...GET MY PHOTO ON THE PHOTOPAGES? Send a snapshot of yourself to Ken W8ROG 25206 Hayes Roseville MI 48066.

...GET A COPY OF FISTS PRESENTATION to give at my local club meeting? Contact Randy K8EZ, 2674 Gemini Dr, Lk Orion MI 48360 email - k8ez@concentric.net

...FIND THE WEB PAGE? <http://www.FISTS.org>

...SUGGEST IDEAS FOR THE WEB PAGE? Contact Bill KK4KF at bjmyers@arc.net

...ORDER FISTS CLUB QSL CARDS? send SASE to WX9X at 354 West St, Valparaiso IN 46383

...ORDER A FISTS CLUB ID BADGE? Our club badge is dark blue, with FISTS logo in gold and your name, FISTS number, callsign and "Int'l Morse Preservation Society" in white. They are \$6.95 postpaid from The Signman of Baton Rouge 879 Castle Kirk Dr, Baton Rouge LA 70808; email nv5a@aol.com

...IMPROVE MY CODE SPEED and MEET LOTS OF NEW FRIENDS? Join FISTS! Get involved in the nets and activities!

The Keynote is published monthly by Nancy Kott WZ8C Post Office Box 47
Hadley MI 48440-0047 Email: nancy@tir.com



WZ8C reserves the right to edit submissions for space, clarity and topic suitability. Comments not attributed to another are written by WZ8C. Articles from The Keynote may be reprinted if credit is given to the original author.

NORTH KEYNOTE AMERICAN

Slow Traffic Net: Tuesday & Thursday 9pm EDT on 3.682
Century Award Net: Sunday 2000Z on 14.058MHz

Slow Ragchewing Group: W8BI 8pm EDT Wed on 3.720
Saturday QSO Groups: 14.058 at 2000Z and 7.058 at 2300Z

Please keep watch on the Novice Bands and frequencies ending in .x58 (.058, .158, .258 etc)
Accuracy Transcends Speed Courtesy At All Times

Hello FISTS! I hope you notice that The Key-note has a new look this month. We are getting a large enough circulation that the Printer who does the printing of the newsletter is able to use this new format, which is more inexpensive than the 11"x17" pages we've been using. We may even be able to add a glossy cover and color as time goes on! Please bear with me as we try out different looks. This is new and we'll probably go thru an evolution period before it's all said and done. As always, I would appreciate your comments and constructive criticism. I want the Keynote to be a newsletter that we are all proud of and enjoy reading as we enter into our tenth year of FISTS CW Club.

Speaking of ten years, I made a HUGE mistake in the last newsletter when telling you the dates for our anniversary Special Event.

Apparently, I was looking at the August calendar instead of September. The correct dates are Friday September 12, 0001Z until Sunday September 14, 2359Z.

Every FISTS member has a chance to participate in the Special Event from your own station at home. Simply get on the air and call "CQ FSE", which stands for CQ FISTS Special Event. Other hams who have heard about the Special Event from reading about it in the magazines and the Internet will be looking for you. Not to mention other FISTS who will want to earn our Special Event certificate!

Keep your own logs and have the stations you contact QSL directly to YOU with an Self Addressed Stamped Envelope (SASE). When the cards with SASE's have come in, write to me requesting the number of certificates you'll need. I'll send them out to you and you, in turn, will fill them out and mail them. It should run pretty smoothly if everyone does their part. You are responsible for your own contacts!

A sample QSO may go like this:
CQ FSE CQ FSE CQ FSE de (your callsign)
<station answers>
TNX FER CALL. (give your name, qth, rst).
<other station returns their name, etc> (please feel free to rag chew- this is NOT a contest situation)
MY CW CLUB IS HAVING OUR 10TH ANNIVERSARY. IF YOU WUD LIKE A CERTIFICATE FOR THIS FISTS SPECIAL EVENT PSE SEND SASE TO (give your address). TNX 73 (callsign)

Feel free to use any abbreviations you are comfortable with - this is just a suggestion to get you started.

Send in a summary of your Anniversary activity to me and we'll have awards for FISTS members as participation warrants. No need to send in your logs; just a summary of how many contacts you made from the start of the Event thru the finish. A note about how conditions were and any comments on the fun you had would be nice to hear, too. But most importantly, get on the air and enjoy yourself!

If you like, I can send some of our application/trifold brochures to enclose with the certificates when you return the SASE's. You can also send the person your regular QSL card confirming the contact if they don't want the certificate.

I would like to remind you to spend some Special Event time in the Novice portion of the bands. I remember when I was a Novice, it was disappointing to hear all the Special Events going on in the General portion of the band and no one in the Novice portion for me to work.

Next month, I hope to have a feature on our Code Buddy program. Ed gave me a big pile of letters from some of the Code Buddies and I would like to share the stories with you. If you're a Code Buddy send in your story so I can include it next month.

Welcome to the New FISTS

- 3491 KE4W Dave in Conway SC (K8UGL)
 3492 KE1FE Gil in West Warwick RI
 3493 WJ2L/4 Bill in Nashville TN (W4HZD)
 3494 KT4XE Duane, Dahlonega GA (WB2FXK)
 3495 W4RMM Bill in Albertville AL (NW3N)
 3496 K4FOL George, Safety Hbr FL (KC5NRB)
 3497 K6RW George in Red Bluff CA
 3498 VE5BCS Harold, Sask. Canada (VE7DWG)
 3499 W1ART Arthur in Riverside RI (KE4UYS)
 3500 KC8HUK Phoneless in Amer. Morse ARC
 3501 KB4JR Bernie in Lake Wales FL (N2SLB)
 3502 WB8FSV Jack in Hilliard OH
 3503 N3NMP Frank in Havertown PA (W19X)
 3504 KA2QIK Philip in Buffalo NY (AA9MU)
 3505 K4YZ Steve in Duncap TN (W4HZD)
 3506 NC5S Ed in Savannah GA (KT4ST)
 3507 W7MAP Charles in Coppell TX (K7CI)
 3508 K6RPN Doug in Grass Valley CA
 3509 KC2BIS George in Califon NJ
 3510 NR2E Hal in Horseheads NY (N2DFT)
 3511 W3DKR Lile in Souderton PA (W4HZD)
 3512 KE4WKH Christine in Elberta AL
 3513 WB6JOB George/CW, Anderson CA (AC6TO)
 3514 KD4KAV J.P. in Columbia SC (K4PTU)
 3515 WB2JGH Bob in Stow OH
 3516 AC4WB Rick in Candler NC (AF9H)
 3517 KK5NA Joe in Arlington TX
 3518 N8YME Eric in Muskegon ME (W4OA)
 3519 W6AUH Dalt in San Mateo CA (W6OWP)
 3520 N4PEJ Bob in Louisville KY (K8LEN)
 3521 W5XU David, Baton Rouge LA (N5YFC)
 3522 W9VU Ray in Arlington Hts IL (K5HLR)
 3523 VE3JMY Murray in Mississauga Ontario
 3524 AB2CE Smitty in Bearsville NY (AI9L)
 3525 N1LN Bruce in Leominster MA (N1YXU)
 3526 KB2WYO Allen in N. Tonawanda NY
 3527 K0MPC Larry in St. Louis MO (K4PTU)
 3528 KE6WEY Phil, Arroyo Grande, CA (KE4JSL)
 3529 KC6RPK Bill in Buellton CA (WA6SBB)
 3530 WB8EQG Bob, Metamora MI (WA8UCS)
 3531 N1UJV Paul in Bourne MA
 3532 W1AB, Al in New Britain CT (K4KYO)
 3533 KF4LUG Matt in Forest Park GA (K4WZ)
 3534 KF4LSG Mike in Forest Park GA (K4WZ)
 3535 KE6YNR Tony in Gilroy CA (W08E)
 3536 KM6XK Don in Dublin CA
 3537 NX2D Glenn in Potsdam NY (N2SLB)
 3538 N4RJN Kenneth in Naples FL
 3539 AC6DA Jeff in Pleasanton CA (K7GT)
 3540 WB4HUL Sidney, Chester VA (KB4OPV)
 3541 W4JVC Andy in Pensacola FL (N4ZMP)
 3542 AB4KX Bryan, White Bluff TN (W0NJZ)
 3543 KO6TQ Cindy, Simi Valley CA (W7UDZ)
 3544 N3ZGZ Roy in Laurel DE (N2RSD)
 3545 KE4EBR Roger, Sevierville TN (WB2FXK)
 3546 KB0JRJ Bill in Burden KS (N1YLA)
 3547 KB7PIM John in Corvallis OR (AC6TO)
 3548 W2FR Howie in Liverpool NY (W7GB)
 3549 N3YVW Nick in Arnold MD (KC5PPO)
 3550 KG0TH Nemo in Denver CO (N1FN)
 3551 KA6MJB John in Long Beach CA (WF6W)
 3552 KB8UAB Ralph/Rap Traverse MI (KC8BAP)
 3553 WD0AXP Swede in Reno NV (K5HLR)
 3554 W4ZCR Roy in Marshall VA (N4ZMP)
 3555 KK8B Dennis in Parma Hts OH (KC8VQ)
 3556 W0EUT Bob in No. Platte NE (W0HP)
 3557 KC5AFL Jim in Atkins AR (K2VT)
 3558 KE4QHV James in Simpsonville SC
 3559 KC7RYE Don, Springfield OR (KD7ABK)
 3560 N2WCY Don, Woodstock NY (KE4HZM)
 3561 KM5JG Terry in New Albany MS (K3CJQ)
 3562 KB0RCU Jim in MN City MN (N4CD)
 3563 KA2ZGW Bryce in San Antonio TX
 3564 KE4EQW Tommy in Lenior NC (KT4YY)
 3565 KF4SEV Ty in Parkton NC (K9AI)
 3566 KC5TAX Rodney in Taos NM (KF6GUH)
 3567 WB7CGK Charles, Bainbridge Is, WA (KT4YY)
 3568 KB1BZV Philip, Pittsfield MA (WB2FXK)
 3569 W3PNL Joe in Souderton PA (KA3WMJ)
 3570 W1BMS Bill in Friendship ME (W4OGZ)
 3571 KC5ZDK Mac, San Antonio TX (W6DDB)
 3572 KC8EAA Scott in Atwater OH (VY2RB)
 3573 N5RTF Thomas in Whitfield MS (K5HLR)
 3574 WB8BSE Don, Bloomfield Hills MI (NE0C)
 3575 N3OGT Andy in Mt Union PA (KE1AF)
 3576 KB3APX Jon in Columbia MD (NS2H)
 3577 K0DTQ Jack in Coon Rapids MN (W4PBL)
 3578 N6SWJ Marty, Penn Valley CA (KC5UJU)
 3579 KV6G Dick in Crescent City CA (K6DF)
 3580 KB9KWA Tom in Burbank IL (KB3AWR)
 3581 W5JAY Jay in Ft Smith AR (Hamvention)
 3582 K7DV John in Douglas AZ (W0AP)
 3583 KB7PWJ Rob in Olympia WA (W6FU)
 3584 WB6AWZ Harley in Portland OR (AB7RJ)
 3585 AA3PW Jim in Hamover PA (N9ZNF)
 3586 W5ELO Chuck in Arcadia TX (K5AX)
 3587 K5PSH Jerry in Bryan TX
 3588 KF2G Jim in Mastic NY (K2ACW)
 3589 VA3ROM Bob in Thunder Bay (WA2FXK)
 3590 N6ZKT Eric in Gulfport MS (K5HLR)
 3591 KB8ZEQ Dan in Paris MI (W8ZNH)
 3592 WA4LJ Doug in Pikeville KY (KB2TWK)
 3593 VE3CBK Chris in Kanata Canada (AA3LM)
 3594 KQ6NS David in Palm Springs CA
 3595 N1JZO Bob in Ware MA (WA1UWZ)
 3596 N2CUF Ken in Henryetta OK
 3597 K4EQ Dave in Roanoke VA (K4UK)
 3598 W3EMB Jack, Exton, PA (N5DMG/B2FXK)
 3599 W5HQL Bob in Ft Worth TX (K5HLR)
 3600 N1WDX Bill in Raymond NH (WA0FGV)
 3601 KA9RZL John in Racine WI (KE4HZM)
 3602 W1GO Tom in Sarasota FL

Callsign Changes

#3398 Steve KC7UXA/AB7VZ is now N7IF.
#3445 Stephanie KC5VGQ is now AC5NF
#3340 John KB9KWL is now W9ISC
#3184 John N3QOO is now N0HJ
#2945 Mike KB2ZSF is now W2GR
#2608 Bill N2WNR is now K2WP
#2522 Dave N1WMG is now N1BT
#2354 Ken AC6NV is now K7PU
#2192 Al WA9FAX is now W8FAX
#1791 Marshall AA0XI is now N1FN
#1581 Jim KE4AGT is now K4AGT
#1042 Brian AA2LK is now N2UB
#1027 Arnie WK1H is now W1TT and would like to be called Arnold now.

Corrections:

The following were wrong on the New FISTS List in the July Keynote:

Ed #3353 was listed KF4PYE; is KF4PYF.
Jerry #3291 should have read KG2LL
Hack 2999 was listed as W8LUY, is W9LUY.
Doug #3449 was listed as KK5WH; KK5WG
Al #3101 was listed as KC3EPA; is KC8EPA
Ed #3490 was listed as N1GDH; is K1GDH.

ARRL CODE WAIVER PROPOSAL

From Newsline: "The Board has proposed changes in the FCC's Volunteer Examiner rules to require that applicants for a ham radio license that requires a demonstrated knowledge of the code, first attempt to pass an accommodated Morse code test before seeking a medical exemption. Usually it is easy to find opposition to an ARRL proposal, but not this time. The organized disabled ham community strongly supports the ARRL's effort to close long standing loopholes in the current medical code waiver."

Photopages Drawing Winner is.....

The winner of the July Photopage contest is Barbara #2018 AE4MG. The August winner is Alex #3304 WA5UNY. Alex and Barbara win FISTS stickers and a FISTS patch just for sending in his photo for the photopages! You are automatically entered in the computer-generated drawing when you send in your photo, so send yours in today!

Issue 8 1997

Congrats!

To Brad KC5NLD on upgrading to Advanced!
To Dick KU4AV on his upgrade to Extra!
To Mike KF4LSG on passing his 20 wpm!
To Matt KF4LUG on finishing up the written for Extra! Mike and Matt are the 12 year old twin sons of Ron K4WZ.
To Matt KE4UKY and Mike KE4UKX on both passing their 20 wpm CW and advanced class licenses! These Matt and Mike twins turned 13 last month.

MARS APPROVES USE OF CW AGAIN!

Skip WB8OWM and Benny K5KV/NNN0LGN have been keeping me informed about the MARS CW situation. You may remember that MARS called a halt to all CW activity on MARS frequencies. They had since reconsidered and are allowing CW on the MARS frequencies once again!

Benny writes: "The net CW boss of Navy-Marine MARS just called the LA traffic net tonight at 9pm. I got a piece of traffic for my wife who is the State MARS boss for Navy Marine Corps - imagine CW used to send a message!

Our net is at 9PM local on 4010KHz.

We have region nets on the same frequency at 5:30 and 6:30 local. Last nite, NNN0KIP/AB5X in TEXAS was NECOS (Net Control Station). The CW nets are authorized by our active duty region director and the active duty acting chief MARS. They get reports on our activity. It doesn't get more official than the chief. The chief is a real neat gal and everyone is coming out of the woodwork to thank her personally."

Robert KB7AQD's friend Steve VK3 NF says that the Australian Navy is using CW; not so much with a key but using lights (for silent running. For promotions, they have to take refresher courses which entails sending Morse at 20 WPM and receiving at 15 WPM on the key, just to drive a boat with 10 to 15 people on board... So much for Morse code being obsolete with the Military!!

Quit Your Yapping, Just Start Tapping!

COMMERICAL CW USE

Bob VA3ROM writes "By the way, CW is not dead commercially. The Canadian Coast Guard still uses it for Arctic operations. Commercial code stations have taken over from the east and west coast Canadian Coast Guard stations and are making money handling CW messages from ships. In the Arctic, satellite is still highly unreliable since the sun blinds satellites in October during the annual solar transit.

Plus HF blackouts, solar flares and storms wreck havoc up there. Also, most ROs on ships in the Canadian Coast Guard are French speaking and we use code by sheer necessity to overcome the language barrier. Same applies to Salties coming into the Port of Churchill. My Russian, Greek and Polish ain't what it shud be. Surprising how many of them can QSO with you using Q-codes and standard short forms, yet are totally incomprehensible on the HF and VHF radio because of accents and English conversational speech.

Good Operating Practices

In addition to learning how to send and receive CW an operator must also learn good operating practices. These are a must! Here are my suggestions:

1. Always listen on the frequency before you transmit. If there are other stations already there move to a clear spot
2. Always send QRL on the frequency before calling CQ! If there are two stations in contact you may be able to hear only one of them. Listen closely. If a station responds QRL thank him/her (tu) and move. Apply items 1 and 2 to the new frequency.
3. Keep your CQ's short. A 3X3 call repeated three times is sufficient. Even if an operator hears your long CQ he may get tired of waiting for you to sign.
4. Study and learn the International Q Signals. They're understood by CW operators world wide. Use them! They are especially valuable when working DX stations.

QRU and good hunting de Ken W6NKE

FISTS Rig Success Story

All the QSO's for my Century Award were made with the Emtech kit NW-20, which I bought thanks to the FISTS Club QRP project kit offer. The contacts were made with this NW-20 QRP-5 Watts and I was lucky to start the list with my sponsor for the FISTS Club WB2FXK Jack, some contacts are two-way QRP.

During this effort I was happy to meet the FISTS Club Member no. 1 Geo using Call sign GX0IPX, further more all call area numbers (1 - 0) are on the list plus UK, Ireland and Canada Members.

This rig is doing a fine job, this week I'm building in the rig the digital readout and memory Keyer from Milestone Technologies.

Thank you for keeping the CW alive, doing a great job and wishing you the strength to keep going on with your goal.

Best regards and 73 Hubert P43HK



QRP-ARCI club offers a quarterly 48 page magazine with kit, software, cd-rom, book and rig reviews, construction articles, mods, news, QRP contests, 8 QRP nets, 6 QRP awards including DXCC, WAS, WAC, 1000 mile per watt, highly effective antennas you can build, Milliwattting 0-1 watts, local QRP club news. For more info, visit our web site at <http://rtpnet.org/~qrp/>

We sponsor a banquet, evening get togethers and technical seminars every year at Dayton. We have over 1500 active members. Come join us. Send \$15.00 U.S. or \$18.00 Canadian to Ken Evans W4DU, 848 Valbrook Ct, Lilburn GA 30047 Include name, address, call signs both old and new, internet address. Get more out of running low power.

FISTS Traffic Handlers

Many FISTS members are active CW traffic handlers, taking considerable time and effort to send traffic messages to the new FISTS listed in each Keynote. Arley **WB5NKC** and Pat **WB5NKD** are two such folks.

Your efforts are appreciated and don't go unnoticed. Arley writes: "The thing of it is, we are having fun doing the traffic. And while we are having fun, we are training traffic handlers to be available in case they're needed for an emergency communication problem. Here in Oklahoma everyone thought it would be tornadoes that knock out the communication. However it proved to be a Ryder truck full of fertilizer placed in a downtown area. That did it. The cell phones were useless since AT&T used the circuits only for the rescuers. No long distance service was available for several days.

I used the AFMARS voice circuits to pass some info, and used phone for local calls, but used the CW nets for the out of state biz. Thunderstorms made same day service impossible even with CW. Some of the messages had to go the next day on the ARTS 40 meter CW nets."

More evidence of FISTS being involved in CW traffic comes from Arnie **KT4ST**: "Just a note to let you know that I delivered Arley's NTS message to Ed Woodson. Ed is a friend of mine (I sponsored him into FISTS) and he loves CW. Ed thought that the message was great. I'll send a formal NTS reply message to Arley as well. The great thing about the message was it was an ALL FISTS event.

Arley sent it and GSN (Georgia Slow Net) received it, the NCS who gave it to me was **KE4NAY** (a FIST) who sent it to me **KT4ST** (a FIST) for delivery to **NC5S** (a FIST). I thought that was very cool. And who says CW and traffic handling are dead?

This is from a new FISTS member: "I just received my first N. A. Memo and am very impressed. Also had quite a surprise with a phone call from a ham I didn't know with 2 messages he was relaying to me off of a traffic net wishing me a happy birthday from FISTS members far away. fb es tnX Duane #3494 **KT4XE**

COMPLETE STATION FOR SALE

For the last several months I have been in and out of hospitals trying to outrun the old bug-a-boo cancer. Well I have lost the race and have been told that it is terminal and I have just a few months to live. I have chosen not to go the chemotherapy route as the doctors state it would have little or no effect.

I want to help my wife in every way I can to dispose of those items that she will not need. Here is the list of my equipment.

Drake Tr-4 with AC-4 power supply and MS-4 (great CW rig)

MFJ 949C Versa Tuner II (Antenna tuner)

MFJ Signal Enhancer (MFJ-752C)

MFJ Grandmaster Memory Keyer (MFJ-486)

Trap Dipole Ant. 40-20-15-10 (new) with coax.

Vibroplex Key

Microphone and other misc. items.

I am asking \$500 + buyer pays shipping costs.

I can be contacted by email at DWalpole@juno.com

Telephone (360)426-2902, or postal mail at

E320 Budd Dr. Shelton, WA 98584

Thanking you in advance for any help I remain,
Sincerely yours, Del Walpole **W7UDZ**

FOR SALE

John **K8LJG** (phone: 810-736-0026) is selling the following:

Knwd TS830S with both 500 cycle CW filters, matching AT 230 antenna tuner and matching external VFO 230 with manual and service manual for \$850.

MORSE TELEGRAPH CLUB

The Morse Telegraph Club is looking for a Grand Secretary-Treasurer. If you are a member of the Morse Telegraph Club and are interested in volunteering for the job, Jim Adkins would like to hear from you. Contact him at Jim Adkins, 710 Quail Ridge Dr, Freeport IL 61032-2920; Phone 815-235-3454 or email jramtc@mwci.net

The Two Ernies...Two of a Kind

By Hector NP4FW FIST 2531

Among the most important benefits a person finds by being a member or FISTS are not only the great number of new friends you made but also the number of old friends you find.

In one of our last issues of our Newsletter, I was happy to find the names of two of my most respected friends I have ever met in ham radio: Ernie Cardona KP4AWI #3302 and KP4EIH Ernie Marquez. Boy I was really happy to see their names as members of FISTS.

Sometimes, you find people who have given substantial contributions to ham radio and they go by unnoticed and without anybody giving them at least a pat on the back for a job well done. If we look at ham radio the way I do, the true reward for these type of people and for their contribution to ham radio is just the satisfaction of knowing that someone else is enjoying and learning from something they have done or from their knowledge. These people seldom like to be rewarded or mentioned for service rendered to others which in fact, is the true purpose of ham radio.

I really think after finding their names that these two gentlemen really deserve at least a few words.

Ernie Cardona KP4AWI is a man with a lot of experience in ham radio; well known for his extensive knowledge on antennas, antenna wires, open ladders, a true lover of the old Drakes while keeping abreast on the new stuff. A great human being with a high sense for friendship. He never hesitates to share his knowledge on antennas, coax cables, and related issues with anybody at any time, even at dinnertime. For many years, acted as director of one of the most prestigious and maybe the oldest clubs in our country - The Puerto Rico Amateur Radio Club. He is one of its past presidents.

Ernie Marquez KP4EIH goes the same way. Soft spoken, good humor, this gentleman has always shared his knowledge on ham radio with anybody seeking for his help. An enthusiast of AMSAT and satellite issues, of QRP, antennas where his knowledge is also very very high to

this effect. He was the counselor for technical issues and to my knowledge past president of another well known radio group in Puerto Rico - The Atlantic Radio Club. For business reasons, he has to settle in the U.S. since last year.

I think the FIST is very fortunate to have among us guy's like them and I thank God for giving me the chance to share their friendship.

To both of you Ernies, two of a kind, wherever you are, God bless you both and thanks for a job well done. Welcome to FISTS.

Tip Of The Coax by Bud WA2BQI #2009

To all QRPers, and hams thinking about getting into QRP.

A TIP OF THE COAX goes out to John Shannon, K3WWP he finally got to me with all his fine articles on QRP. I just sent for my fourth award for QRP work to Colin Neal AA3LM, who sponsors a very nice certificate program for QRP operators.

My awards now include the following certificates from Colin:

- 1) 25 STATES, using 4 watts on 20 mtrs. - MFJ 9020
- 2) 25 STATES, using my 1 watt SPIDER - ONE (xtal controlled) rig by LECTRO KIT CO.
- 3) 25 STATES, for 40 mtrs - using my Yaesu twins at 5 watts
- 4) 25 COUNTRIES - using my MFJ 9020 20 mtr rig.

For AA3LM award program, you don't need to send him QSL cards. Just your word will do. I usually send him a list of calls that I have worked. He charges \$1.00 per certificate and he gets the certificate back to you in a few days.

Awards available from AA3LM are as follows: 25 and 50 States, 6 Continents, and 25, 100, 200 and 300 COUNTRIES. You may specify any request, mode or band endorsements, and rigs that you have used to be put on your certificate. For certificates or information, contact Cohn Neal AA3LM 264 Miner St. Malvern, PA 19355.

Now that I am hooked on QRP, I am looking for a 5 band QRP rig so I don't have to keep switching my antennas and rigs around.

John recently had a very nice article in the NCJ (publication by the ARRL) for QRP work

plus a picture of his station and him as well. John - have you written any books on QRP yet?

For those of you who still feel that the old saying of "A QSO isn't a QSO until you have a QSL" now both QRPers and QROers can make this happen for only 5 cents anywhere in the U.S.A. by using the new QSL Bureau with very good results. For more information please send an S.A.S.E. to the following address.

USA QSL BUREAU - P.O. BOX 814, Brewer ME 04412-0814. If you want to spend more time on the air, and less time doing your paper work, the bureau offers a special program for this as well.

For FISTS QSO's use your FISTS QSL BUREAU, information can be found in any Key-note newsletter.

If you hunt counties, you can use the Amateur Confirmation-Exchange Service. For more information please write to: ACES-Howard Siegel 15020 N. 7th Dr., Phoenix, Arizona 85023-5214. (S.A.S.E please.)

I have a very simple system that I use for QSLing. I QSL every 100 DX stns, every state side 100 QSO's, and for FISTS every 6 contacts. This seems to work very well for me.

My next article will touch on little known awards you can work for and usually achieve simply by QSLing your FISTS members.

In closing I'd like to add one final word. No, I am not a Big Gun - simply just a Little Pistol in ham radio. 73 Bud WA2BQI

Thanks for the tips Bud! I'm not sure what you mean about how you QSL every 100 DX, every US 100 and every 6 FISTS. Perhaps you can explain that more thoroughly in one of your next letters?

CQ Not Giving me equal time!

Thank You to everyone who wrote to CQ magazine/Fred Maia W5YI regarding his column in their July issue. Fred used his Washington Happenings column, which is allegedly about official updates regarding the FCC and ham radio, to print his opinion about CW as a requirement for HF privileges.

He noted that it was a transcript of his debate with me in Dayton, but didn't give me equal time to give my side of the Debate. The article went far beyond what he said in Dayton. We each only had four minutes and it would take about a half hour to read his three page article in CQ!

Ralph summed it up very nicely in this letter he wrote to W5YI:

"Dear OM Fred, I usually enjoy reading your column, but was surprised with your July effort. What you wrote may well be proven correct, but the fact that it was one side of a debate caused me to seek the other side of that same debate.

Instead you used your position as a regular columnist to promote only your side of the issue. I am surprised that the editor let you get away with it. Any reputable publication would show balance and then leave it to readers to come to their own conclusion.

I trust that in a subsequent issue you will give the full column to Nancy Kott's contribution to the same debate. That would be the only fair thing to do.

By the way, how is it that when just about every amateur radio organization worldwide is losing membership, the FISTS club is increasing membership? Ralph Sutton ZL2AOH

The Official Story of How FISTS Got It's Name

I am often asked, as I am sure many of you are also, What does FISTS mean? Is it an acronym? I knew that FISTS isn't an abbreviation for anything, it meant "fist" as in the distinctive way a CW ops sending sounds. But I wondered how Geo came up with the name - so I asked him. This is what he wrote in answer to the question: "I used to be a member of TOPS before it went out. Quote on their banner was "Where FISTS make friends". A "FIST" as you know is nothing more than a CW ops' reference to another ops' keying characteristic. Phil (Tops founder / sec) was delighted when I told him of the connection though he was later to follow his xyl and his beloved dog but I will never forget enthusiasm which came back from his old vibro. 73 de Geo

A letter printed from Rich AC4NW resulted in a flurry of response! It's heartening to see so many ops supporting the FISTS Philosophy!

Rich wrote again to further clarify his original letter and hopes this clears up any misunderstanding of his point. I'm sorry that some of the FISTS misconstrued my previous letter published in the July Keynote. I was merely trying to point out that learning to be proficient with Morse code, as in anything depends largely upon the effort put forth by the individual. To that end I think it is helpful to take advantage of some of the excellent tapes and code programs available. If I was wrong, I'm sorry.

Let me say at the outset that I do slow down if the other operator is slower than I. It would be foolish not to. The speed of a QSO is determined not only by my speed, but by the speed and efficiency of the other ham. To think I go racing through the bands calling CQ at 35 or 40 QPM and not answering anyone who comes back at a slower speed is simply ridiculous.

I have taught Morse code classes and I want to tell you it's very discouraging to have to stay on the same lesson for 5 or 6 weeks, simply because the students failed to spend any time practicing. No amount of effort on my part will ever make this type of student an efficient operator.

Also as a VE with some experience administering code tests, I have found that 60-90 % of applicants are totally unprepared to take the exams. Most exceptions are ex-Navy or commercial ops who want to get back into radio. But with the multiple choice questions and a little luck, some applicants eventually pass, only to never look at CW again, simply because they never learned it in the first place.

My little niece, Tina KC2BCQ, recently passed her General class exams, just before turning age 10. Now if she can do it, others can do it too. And she isn't stopping there. She plans to get her Extra class ticket before age 12. Of course she had some help from her dad, but it also took some effort on her part.

As for myself, my wife says I'm always on fast forward. Since that is my nature, I guess I like to do things quickly. But when it comes to sending code, I try to do it smoothly and pre-

cisely. I'm often told my sending is easy to copy. But if I slow down to 13 WPM or so, it throws my timing off, resulting in lots more errors. I'm sure any experienced op has the same trouble. Let's not ostracize us all for that.

I have no quarrel with those who want to join a slow net and try to help out the slower hams. I prefer to do it another way, by teaching a beginners code class, which is much needed in these parts. I have devised what I think is a very simple way to learn the code. It does involve sight as well as sound. I'll let you know how it turns out. I learned the code in one week using this method, and in about a month I went into the FCC office and passed the 13 WPM test on the first try. That was back when you really had to know the code. I did have the help of one Farnsworth record to help me learn. All the dumbing down of the tests since then have not resulted in better operators, but worse ones, as you well know.

I hope I have succeeded in clarifying my position. CW Forever, Rich, AC4NW #3106

Thanks for writing again, Rich. I sympathize about the problems of teaching a CW class. I tried it for years with my local club and finally got tired of knocking my head against a brick wall.

Part of the problem teaching CW in a class situation (at least from my experience) is the negative attitude the students pick up from the OM's teaching the written part. When I tried to have a CW class, they allowed me to have 20 minutes at the beginning of the class for CW. The rest of the time was spent on the written part of the exam - "the real part they needed to know to get their ticket." Who were the potential new hams going to believe - a YL who wants them to actually study and spend time learning something boring, or a bunch of guys with neat looking HT's who are telling them that all they need to get on the air is memorizing a few questions?

Keep us posted on your new code teaching method, it sounds intriguing!

I was working one of the Novice bands in April of this year when I heard what had to be the slowest CW in the world coming through my ear phones. The spacing was probably two seconds apart and some of the letters were sent improperly.

A few of the operators responded to this CQ by commenting that the LID should get off the air. Mind you, they didn't give their call signs or identify in any other way, and they certainly didn't answer this operator's call. Real gentlemen or ladies to be sure.

As I listened to this OPs CQ, I thought back to the day that I had attempted to make my first CW contact. I was very nervous and desperately wanted no one to answer. But they did. Not only did they respond, but they had the nerve to ask me questions and make nice comments about my signal and rig. As time went on, my speed improved and so did my confidence.

I waited for one more call, then sent back his call and then mine, at the same speed he was sending. I waited, then waited some more. Finally, he answered. "Thanks for the call and 73." Knowing that this would not be acceptable I sent back "Nice to meet you, what is ur name and QTH?" He answered my questions then sent 73 again. "Oh no, you don't get away that easily", I thought. "Hows the WX there?" I kept the conversation going for nearly an hour.

A week later I received a very nice QSL in the mail. It read "Tnx for the QSO, Arnie, es Tnx fer sending slow enough. I mostly have to copy 13 wpm, which I can barely do, 73" By the way, this operator is 12 years old (and certainly not a LID).

I'm sure that he will pick up his speed in time. Heck, he did it while we were chatting. I strongly believe that we SHOULD QRS for those that need it. It's our way of saying welcome to CW and keep up the good work. I keep that QSL card on the bulletin board next to my rig. It reminds me that we ALL started slow, and scared. 73Arnie-KT4ST

Gary KJ5VW shares a story about a chat he had the other day.

Just about the time you think the ham fraternity has become hardened, competitive, slanderous and aggressive, you have a QSO like I had last evening.

About 6:30 pm local I heard a nice strong 20 meter CQ coming out of California so I responded. The op at the other end was a 9 year girl named Lauren who was sending a very crisp 13 wpm and copying everything I had to say.

Instead of telling me about her rig, antennas and the weather, she proceeded to tell me about her cat named "Jake". Her radio room had a bad cat "infestation" [big word for a fourth grader, I thought.] I learned that Jake played with the key while she was sending, that he often bit her and he was one nosy, nasty cat.

I told her about Cali and Lilly, my cats, who licked my nose to wake me up in the morning. She enjoyed my story. Our QSO was cut short when Lauren's mother insisted that "chores" and fourth grade homework came before operating the radio. She didn't want to leave, but signed 73 and blew me an 88 across the 1200 miles.

As I filled in the log later, I had a really warm glow. In what other hobby would a bright-eyed fourth grader and a slightly grizzled, 54 year old man find a way to talk about a cat named "Jake?"

Isn't this hobby grand?

Plea From A Net Control Op

Crimanlities, troops, what's going on out there? Checkins to the net are spread out more than a dx pileup!! I know the net freq is published in the newsletter, but sometimes I've got to move a bit to find a clear freq to call things up. **WHER-EVER THE NCS IS, IS THE NET FREQ!!** If I ask ya to zero beat or move up or down to get within spittin' range of everyone else, please do it. Otherwise, no one else will hear you and my blood pressure will suffer. signed, the anonymous net control station

Morse Code: The music you play with only one key.

News and Views From FISTS Members

Been a ham for 11 months and had a personal goal to make extra within a year. Made it in abt 9 months. Like CW the best. Hope it never goes as a requirement for the HF bands. If I can get to 20+ wpm in 9 months I think anyone can!! If you want something bad enough you can get it! My belief is it is probably laziness is the root of all the debate. It goes hand in hand with everything else that the USA has grown lazy in. Tnx es "73" Mike W2GR

I subscribe to a CW magazine out of the UK, called *Morsum Magnificat*. In the latest issue, MM52, an internet list server "Keyclicks" is mentioned. Do you know about this internet list server? How do we subscribe? 73 Ted K8NA

Another reason to use CW is because many hams, who aren't as financially well off as we Americans, have CW-only radios to communicate with; it'd be arrogant to think that hams everywhere own the same kind of equipment we have here in the States, let alone have access to the same. Just a thought...Rich, WF7A

I send "CQ FISTS" on 10118 10128 18088 24898 24908 24918 24928 24938 kHz. From 10125-10150 the AMTOR/RTTY stations chirp constantly so I would suggest running a bit lower. Few use 12M, so I doubt anyone will complain if I call on 24938 with CW. It would be a great place for SSB/CW practice & speed nets.

Made a nice contact with N3XT Tom, #2327, on 21058 kHz. The band sounded dead, only the IBP Stanford beacon net on 21150 kHz could be heard. The 4U1UN/B beacon came in S9 at 100w, and still could be heard at the 1w level...so I figured the band was still open at 0130Z to the east coast. He answered quickly, then I worked W4WX (not FISTS, yet...) in Florida. A third "W4" station tried to call me, but we could not make it.

Tom told me that I was his first FISTS on 15M. Likewise, he was MY first FISTS contact on 15M. I guess when you become a member of FISTS, you become "DX" to everyone! 72 es 73 Robert KB7AQD

By the way, on the ARTS (Amateur Radio Telegraph Society) net, we sign with this - 73 WUF WUF. The Amateur radio group, ARTS, is the wolf pack of amateur radio traffic handlers, and when a wolf is leaving the pack, he hollers a good bye WUF. ARLEY and PAT

For those people who have the capability to surf and others that may be learning the Morse Language, I now have a course setup online using the ARRL CD audio disks. It is my hope that the hints and kinks will help others to start and learn without the pitfalls that I see a lot of people go through. I am interested in any feedback that other instructors may have also. I am doing this as I realize that not everyone can have an elmer to sit down with and others may be just plain shy. Chuck K5FO

The URL for Chuck's code course page is <http://reality.sgi.com/adams> Give it a look if you have the ARRL CD disks - it's like having a friend there encouraging you. It just might give you the motivation you need to get going!

I got my first straight key to compliment my paddles. My thoughts on the CW debate: The only reason I started CW was to help myself over the 10 wpm hump so I could upgrade and then never use CW agn. That was 8 months ago. Haven't used the mic since then, am an extra now and having a ball. Hope to meet many FISTS members in the future. Duane KR4XE

Read the "Antenna Talk" article in May-June Key Note by Reed, W4DXB about the difficulty of running ladder line through a window into the shack. For several years I have been replacing the glass in the window with plastic and then heating an awl or ice pick to melt holes to fit ladder line or coax. Drilling holes tends to cause cracks in the plastic. Hope this is of some help to those who want to use ladder line. 73, Dick, K8UGL, FISTS 2172

Morse Code: The game you play with only one paddle

Hello from Thunder Bay Ontario. This is Fred **VE3FAL #2337**. Thought I would drop you a line to tell you that my membership renewal will be in the mail in the morning. The last year with FISTS has been a great one. It has been nice meeting with other members on the air on various bands and speeds. Also great to meet other QRP nuts like myself. I was also introduced to a Code Buddy via **WA3QSJ**. My Code Buddy from southern Ontario has not got on the air with me yet but we have talked on the phone, and we are waiting for better propagation conditions before the big day. This is a great club.

FB Fred! Thanks for letting us know you are enjoying being a FISTS member - keep us posted on your progress with your Code Buddy, too.

What a joy es pleasure it has been for me to be a member of FISTS. My first year as a member of our fast-growing organization has flown by so quickly. Mni tnx to all the devoted workers fer continuing to perform such an outstanding job in keeping FISTS an informative es progressive organization. 73 88 Charlie #2593 **W3RMD** and Bettye

Thanks for the kind words Charlie es Bettye. There are a lot of people volunteering their time, effort and resources for FISTS behind the scenes - we appreciate hearing that our efforts are appreciated!

From Virgil **K9AI**: I send out applications with my QSL cards to most of the new hams I contact on the Novice portion and some older hams too. I don't mind slowing down for the new guys/gals. In fact I really enjoy working them and helping them get started. FB Virgil, helping the newcomers is one of the best ways to insure we'll always have people enjoying CW on the ham bands!

Tom **AF4NC** sends in this Jeff Foxworthy "You Might Be A Redneck If..."

You have more electronic equipment in your truck than in your house."

From John **KG9HV**: The indication from NOAA shows we have started Solar Cycle 23. The SFI should be over 100 by June of 1998. Hopefully this will bring more contacts with FISTS members in Europe and Australia. I am looking forward to 10 meters coming back. There have been some openings during the afternoon, last week I worked Spain on 10M. This was the first DX I've had in 2 1/2 years on 10M.

From Jere **KC5NRB**: My year in FISTS has been a big fun time. Just finished and sent off my Century Award. Love CW and talking to other FISTS ops. Wanted really bad to go to Dayton but couldn't get the time off. Maybe next year. Thanks for the renewal and the 'extra' Jere. I sure do hope you get to Dayton next May, it's my firm belief that every ham should attend the Hamvention at least one in their lifetime! And I'm not just saying that because I want to rope you into putting in an hour or two at the FISTS booth!

From Brad **KC5NLD**: Thanks to all the FISTS for their patience with my "QLF." QSO's with other FISTS are what is improving my code skills. I still cannot use a paddle very well though, and now use a Bencher straight key. It I like.

I have made only one SSB contact since rebuilding a Heathkit HW-101, my only full power and phone rig. Late one night I had moved into the 75/80 meter band to hear what all the complaints of SSB up there are about, now I know, and I heard a pileup on a DX station. I rummaged around for my D-104 mike, plugged it in, contacted the station, and unplugged it. The only reason I have the mike is to assist in setting the bias. Since then, aside for alignment purposes, the mike has remained unused, nor does it sit on my desk.

You and George and all the other contributors do an excellent job in both the stateside and continental editions of the Keynote. I do not always agree with the articles and letters, which is as it should be, but I believe that they are all done in good taste, civility and proper spirit. After all, there are times when we should agree to disagree. Keep up the good work and let me know if I can help you. Thanks Brad!

From Cindy **KO6TQ**: I use only CW on HF but as I am disabled, I use a keyboard rather than a keyer (I copy code by hand). Other hams, including Del **W7UDZ**, have assured me the only requirement is the enjoyment of CW. I would be interested in knowing if other members use a keyboard.

Welcome to FISTS Cindy. Of course! It's fine to use a keyboard to send CW - FISTS doesn't care how you do it, as long as you're on the air and having fun with it. We have many FISTS who use keyboards for various reasons, ranging from personal preference to disabilities, but I have no idea how many. Maybe some of them will write in and let us know.

From Ken **W6NKE**: I would like to call your attention to the transposition of numerals quoted from my letter which appears on page 10 of the latest issue of Keynote. The numerals should have read 61! I would appreciate your correcting this error. Some of my ham buddies, FISTS members, are kidding th' heck out of me about that!

I was born into the era when all ham rigs, antennas, etc were all home brew. I look back on those days as The Golden Age of Ham Radio. The average ham was on the air as a result of his/her personal knowledge, efforts and ability to scrounge and assemble junk parts into a working receiver and transmitter.

OOPS! Sorry about that Ken - HEY! You FISTS friends of Ken's - stop picking on him now, it was my mistake -- He really IS an Old-Timer, hi!

From Forrest **KB3AWR**: I just breezed thru my last es final cpy of CQ Magazine, es unfortunately I came across the article agn by **W5Y1**. That article, es therefore that magazine is a disgrace to amateur radio! Just imagine what the young amateurs are thinking, those who worked so hard fer their tickets! **W5Y1** mentions in the article that he was a CW operator es worked all countries on CW. How could any intelligent person say that a mode of operation is not needed anymore, es in the same breath publicly announce that he worked all countries on the mode!

Can u figure that out? I can't!

Maggie es I received our first publication of Keynotes es it is a very fine newsletter indeed! Ur doing a fine job Nancy es we r looking forward to the next Keynotes. I hve made many contacts since becoming a fists, es they will be sending U applications fer membership. As fer "CQ" Magazine, I hve cancelled my subscription, es will never pick another one up!!! I guess some people can't understand what the true meaning of CW is all abt, it is not simply a bunch of dots es dashes es a pain in the "butt" to learn, it is a discipline that instills in the operator that amateur radio is a serious hobby, es requires the skills of communication not available to any person, unless that person wishes to work fer it. The mode of the country now is "I want something fer nothing!" I am proud to be a FISTS, es I will pound "CQ Fists CQ Fists" until my key falls apart! Then I will put it back together agn es continue HI HI!

Thanks for your comments Forrest - I did edit them a bit for "political correctness", as you suggested - but believe me I agree with your observations!!

Jim **K4AGT** writes "I guess I was the first to work Geo/W8 on Sunday after Dayton. What a thrill! I was cut short by a tornado warning here." FB on working Geo from 8 land, Jim. Brian kept Geo so busy on the air and operating from VE3-land that I didn't even get to have an eyeball while he was in Michigan. He did more visiting "on the air" than he did in person, hi!

Darryl **KC7MAX** renews his subs and sez he is "proud to be a FISTS member and reads the Keynote from front to back. Also appreciate all the volunteers that help to make FISTS! I just moved to ID from WA and don't have my ham gear up yet, but will before winter! I can't wait. All I do is on HF is CW." Thanks for the kind words, Darryl. We'll be looking forward to hearing you from ID - specially those FISTS working toward WAS!

If there's a moral to this story, it's that inside of every ham is a CW op waiting to get out. All it takes is a little of that FISTS Philosophy - Elmering - to find him!

I just want to tell you and other members of FISTS how much I enjoy FISTS, Key Notes and meeting FISTS on the air. It really is a great club with friendly members. How I became a member of FISTS is kind of interesting. In 1995 I met Joe Falcone N8TI when he came to my QTH to purchase a HF rig from an estate I was looking after.

Joe told me I should learn cw to get on HF. At the time I was a no code basic operator here in VE Land. I had no interest in learning code. I was not one of those people who was opposed to it I just didn't want to bother with it. But in time I got around to it, passed my 5 wpm test, then in my 12 wpm, which is the highest endorsement needed here in Canada.

In 1996 Joe and I went to Dayton together, where I met some FISTS members at the Social night. Joe was once again bugging me about my cw activities, telling me to do more cw as it was a good way to work dx and rag chew. I explained to Joe that I had nothing against cw, in fact I hoped the powers to be never drop it as a requirement for HF, but it just wasn't my game. I tried using a straight key which led to mistakes on the air. Joe explained I needed a set of paddles and this would make matters easier.

In August of 1996 Joe sent me a set of Vibroplex paddles and a keyer. After trying them that same day they arrived, I bought a Bencher and keyer from a local ham. Now CW was easier, not a tiring operation like it used to be. Next Joe told me that we would have a QSO and if he felt I was improving he'd sponsor and also pay for my first year of FISTS membership. So here I am FISTS 2767, thanks to Joe N8TI. I have sponsored a couple of new members myself. I really enjoyed helping out at the Dayton FISTS booth this year, and this time I met FISTS that I had QSO'd, which was really great.

Nancy I attended your debate with W5YI, and I think you were great. It was rather obvious that the majority of the people in the room were in favour of keeping CW as a requirement

for HF. But unlike W5YI, they have no financial gains at stake, which I feel is the bottom line with this guy. I let everyone in the room know what I thought about cw requirements.

"To be a ham you have to be dedicated to your hobby, and if you are not dedicated enough to learn CW for HF privileges then do we really need you on our bands? Nothing comes easy in life for most of us, we have to earn what we have" I am the president of the local ham club. There are a few no code hams in our club, and I hear the excuses all the time about learning CW. "I have no time", and yet they will sit at the computer on packet radio or the internet for hours a week! Or "I'm never going use the mode so why learn it?" Hey that is what I thought 3 years ago and now I use it for almost 90% of my ham QSO's.

I tell them it takes 10 to 15 minutes a day to practice. I borrowed one of the no coders TS50 for my holidays and just told him I'd give it back when he passed his 5 wpm test hi hi. Now he has something to work for, and when he passes maybe I'll pay his FISTS membership like Joe did for me.

On behalf of myself and all the other FISTS members I'd like to THANK all of the FISTS volunteers who dedicate their time and effort to the club. Without people like you there would be no FISTS. TNX!

On closing I'd like to wish Joe N8TI all the best in the upcoming ARRL elections. I know Joe would make a great Director for the Great Lakes region. GOOD LUCK JOE. Take Care CU on the air. 73 Rick VE3FMC

Car Battery Connections

For those interested in hooking up their radios straight to the car battery, there's a new connector available. It goes over the battery post and under the regular battery connector, and accepts one 8- or 10-ga wire and two 4-ga wires (let's see, that's one v/uHF duobander, one 100w hf rig, and that mobile kw...). For info, send an SASE to: Scosche Industries, 5160 Gabbert Rd., Moorpark CA 93021 or call 805-523-0687.

In a related item, a fellow club member (who will go unnamed) discovered why you should have both the positive and negative leads to the

battery fused for any radio installation. Seems the starter solenoid on his pickup truck locked up, and the starter wouldn't disengage. Time to pop a battery cable - unfortunately he picked the negative cable, and the radio leads were still wrapped around the battery post. Now the starter was grounding out through the lightweight wiring harness and chassis grounds of his 2m box. Said 2m box now has a vague resemblance to a cinder. A fuse in the negative lead would have prevented the whole thing...

"HE'S BAAAAAAK..." If you've wondered whatever became of Dick Bash, wonder no more. He's alive and well on the Internet. Check out the following site: <http://cord.iupui.edu/~mbash>. Our old buddy has been going to school, and to quote his on-Web bio, "...in March 1996 he completed an M.S. in Administration of Justice and may teach the subject."

Don **WD8OCV** sent us a very nice long article from the Sentinel newspaper about the father of FISTS member Alan **KC8EPA**. Here is an excerpt:

Early last summer my son, Alan was fooling around with his computer and had been surfing in the Internet. He came across the ARRL Web page. The ARRL offered textbooks complete with all the questions and answers for getting on the air. The program also explained that on no longer had to appear before the FCC to take the test, but before a volunteer examiner at a ham fest site. He sent for the books and began practicing the Novice portion of the Morse code. By August, Alan had joined the ranks of America's hams as a Technician Plus.

My oldest son, Jeffrey was so impressed with Alan's endeavors and successes, that he too became interested and by the closer of the year, Jeff became a ham. By early spring, both had upgraded their licenses; Jeff went to Tech Plus and Alan advanced to the next level as a General Class licensee.

Every time one of the two boys came to the house or called on the telephone, they queried as to whether or not I was studying the book and practicing the Morse code. I wasn't. In fact I rarely picked up the book or got onto the code practice oscillator over the following weeks.

I began taking a morning stroll instead, meeting up with Don (**WD8OCV**) and Shirley Otto at the Squire Shoppe Bakery. Since they already knew my two sons; they encouraged me to get into the ham radio studies. At the same time they suggested to my sons that they not pressure their dad else he may never get in on their hobby. They backed off and I began preparing in earnest.

For the next two weeks, one by one I read and reread all of the questions, covering up the answers until I knew them by heart. I found myself wading into milliamperes, farads, microfarads, milliwatts and volts, watts, and prop-

agation. I also had to learn the 26 Q signals although a only a half dozen or so are regularly used by ham radio operators.

For the most part it was a grueling two weeks. I spent every minute of my free time with my nose in the books, all the while pretending to my sons that I really just didn't have time right now, suggesting that retirement years might be a better time to get into the hobby.

Don **WD8OCV** worked with me by conversing in the ham lingo. Don offered to drive me to Erie and suggested we keep the whole thing quiet until I actually passed the test and got my callsign from the FCC.

To make a long story short, I would have aced the Novice quiz, but I somehow answered questions #3 twice; and I only missed three questions on the Tech exam, passing both to become a ham radio operator after all these years.

I continued to keep my secret. That night, Alan said that his own daughter would hold an Extra license before I ever got around to studying for the very first Novice test. I bit my tongue and sealed my lips.

On Monday, I entered the Internet and pulled down my bookmark for the Callbook where low and behold, the FCC showed I had been assigned the amateur radio license bearing the call sign **KC8HIZ**. I could hardly contain myself and called Don right away. We set up a time for me to get on the air that night at his QTH where we would hope to shock the shorts off both my sons.

We tried to reach Alan on 2 meters, but he was on his way to work. A few minutes later we caught word of my son, Jeff, **KC8FNK** talking to radio friend Phil. Jeff was trying out a new antenna.

At a pause in their conversation, I called out **KC8FNK**, this is **KC8HIZ**. There was a long pause with Jeff coming back asking for a repeat. I repeated the info and told him "it's your dad." The silence was absolutely deafening for several moments when he finally returned with hardy congrats and "where did you get the callsign."

A few moments later, Alan was on the air having apparently been called by Jeff to get on the air. I again broke into the conversation and enjoyed an extremely long period of silence followed by a heaping helping of congrats. It was only then that I finally revealed that I actually did take a whole lot of time to study, keeping it a deep dark secret from both of them.

After we signed off, the boys went to the Jefferson repeater where they carried on a conversation between the two of them. We listened in and it was then that I realized my kids and our friends were truly proud of my accomplishment. It was an effort truly worth the effort and the wait and the deep dark secret.

I will never be an electronics expert, but like the Internet which helped our family find long-lost relatives in Europe, I hope to find many new friends at home and around the globe, even if we never meet, we will have taken another giant step for mankind.

Sorry for the small type size! But I thought this was a nice story and wanted to get as much of it in as I could.

QRP with John Shannon K3WWP

Last month we covered dealing with a DX station who is taking answers on his own frequency. This is a fine technique until the pileup gets too large and covers up the DX station, making it impossible to know whom the DX is working. When this happens, the DX station goes to split frequency operation, transmitting on one frequency and listening on another, usually higher frequency.

If you hear a DX station say UP (or UP1, UP2, etc.), that means he is listening to a frequency higher than his. The number is the number of kHz higher than his frequency he is listening. Leave your receive frequency on the DX station, and set your transmit frequency UP to where the DX is listening. If he just says UP with no number, generally that means UP 1, but not always. Then you have to find the pileup yourself. Once you determine where the DX station is listening, follow the same procedures as I mentioned last month. Just be sure you are transmitting and listening on the right frequencies. Every rig seems to have a slightly different way of accomplishing this.

If the pileup is huge, you might be better off transmitting slightly higher than the main pile. The DX station will usually explore the upper edge of a pileup if he can't pick out calls from the main section of the pile. This is where the clever QRPer can often steal a QSO from the QRO stations. It's really a chess game, and whole sections of DXing books have been devoted to breaking a pileup.

A problem occurs when the DX station is listening UP, but never says so. This is where listening comes in. If you hear the DX working one station after another, but don't hear any of the stations he is working, it's time to tune UP and see if he is indeed working split frequency. Or you can go ahead and transmit on the DX frequency, and the self appointed DX policemen will very impolitely tell you the DX is listening UP. It's always better to know what's going on before you do any transmitting.

That's enough about the pile-up type of DXing. If you want to know more, just get on the air and practice, or read one of the many excellent books that have been written about

DXing.

Let's touch on a few other DX topics. What about the 'pure' QRPer calling CQ DX. It's probably a waste of time. It might work when the sunspots increase and the higher bands become alive with DX again, but not right now. I have had DX stations answer my regular CQ's several times, but I wasn't calling CQ DX. In fact, my most distant QSO with VK6HQ came when he answered my regular CQ on 30M one evening. I was so shocked and excited I could hardly send. Even after the QSO, I was wondering if it was really true that I worked a VK6. It was, because I received his QSL card in a couple of weeks.

The easiest time to work DX is in contests. The best operators in the world often go to exotic locations for contests to make themselves more desirable or just to activate some rare country. Plus you have the super contest stations in various countries operating with their huge antennas and state of the art receiving equipment. They are the ones who can dig out the weakest of signals, and are glad to do so for those few extra points they will get in the contest. Those points may just help them beat out another top notch contester. You may have a tough time beating the pileups at the beginning of a contest, but often these super contest stations almost go begging for QSO's near the end of a contest period. Then is the time you may easily work them.

The week or so just before contests, many of the stations setting up for the contest will check out their equipment by working as many folks as possible. At these times they may also operate on the WARC bands (30, 17, 12) which are not available for operation in the contest itself. They often stay at their locations for a few days after contests also.

At this stage in the sunspot cycle, I find the best band for DX is 30M outside contests, and 20 and 15 meters in the contests themselves.

Always let the DX station dictate the type of QSO. If you answer a DX station outside a pile-up, and he still sends just a report, you do the same. If he sends RST, QTH, and Name (OP), then you may be fortunate enough to find yourself with a DX rag chew. Send your QTH (maybe just the state), and name, and maybe mention

you are running QRP. It doesn't happen too often, but I have had some very nice rag chews with DX stations. I recall a few I especially enjoyed. I chatted for a half hour with a German who was on vacation in the Canary Islands. A PJ2 wanted to know all about my QTH. I had a nice chat with an Italian talking about my Italian heritage (my mother is Italian). A German asked me all about my QRP rig. And several others as well. These are the DX QSO's I find really rewarding, although I appreciate the RST only ones also. You CAN rag chew with DX using QRP when conditions are good.

Next month starts the second year of this column. I plan a little reprise of previous columns for those many folks who have joined FISTS during the past year. I'm out of space again. Email me if you have questions, comments, etc. My address is johnshan@alltel.net. Till next month, 73.

Don't Forget Straight Key Week!

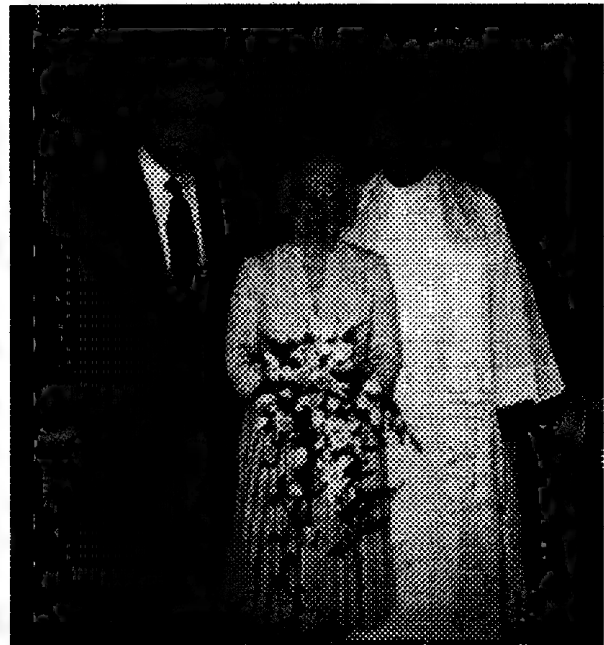
HQ is England is sponsoring the annual Straight Key week. It starts the First Sunday in Sept, 0001Z through 2359Z on the following Saturday. Send your logs and nominations for Best Fist Heard to Bob Lowe. His address is on the masthead of the Keynote on the next page. This is a great time to meet DX FISTS - be sure to take the time difference into consideration when looking for them. You'll have the best luck finding them during their evening hours.

PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT.....

after reading this, and close your eyes and send positive thoughts out to all our FISTS friends who are going through tough or challenging times right now. Three that come to mind this month are Del W7UDZ, who learned he has terminal cancer, Al KB1FK who had a cancerous tumor removed from his brain this last June, and Arnold W1TT (ex-WK1H) who is recovering from a stroke.

Our thoughts and prayers are with you guys, please keep in touch and let us know how you're doing!

A FISTS WEDDING!



Rod W9BRD, FISTS #1782 and Betty VE3ZBB, FISTS #1265 were married on June 27th in a little 131 year old chapel in Ottawa, Canada. They met on 30 meter CW a few years ago before they became FISTS, but as far as we know, they are the first FISTS to tie the knot.

At the present time, Rod and Betty are dividing their time between Canada and Illinois. If you hear them on the air, be sure to congratulate them! That is terrific news!

In closing this Keynote, which also wraps up our ninth year for FISTS, I'm sure Geo G3ZQS joins me in thanking YOU for your support. FISTS is the fastest growing ham organization in the World. That wouldn't be possible if people didn't see FISTS as a positive force in the promotion of the use of Morse code. Every time you call CQ FISTS or send a QSL with a FISTS logo on it you are helping to spread the word. Thanks to those who have renewed their subs and included "extra" to help with the "extras" FISTS does - like the Keynote on tapes for the blind, and the special event activities. One of the neatest things I've seen happen a lot recently is friends subscribing to FISTS as a gift for their friends! It all just proves that we've been right when we say that CW folk ARE special!

73 88 and hope to CU on the air during the Special Event - I'll be there so look for me! Nancy

International Morse Preservation Society



KEY NOTE



Sec: E. (Geo) Longden, G3ZQS. 119 Cemetery Rd., DARWEN, BB3 2LZ, England. 01254-703948
Packet: G3ZQS@GB7HVU. E-Mail: fist1@compuserve.com or morseman@airtime.co.uk

OFFICES

QSL Manager: G0FRL. Bob Lowe
PO Box 190. BOLTON. BL1 4UL.
U.S. Rep: WZ8C. Ms. Nancy Kott.
5450 Diehl Rd., METAMORA, MI48455

PRO: G4YLB. J.A. Welsh

3 Minster Cresc, DARWEN, BB3 3PY

CONTEST MANAGER: GM4BAE

Northbrae, Brookfield Cresc, STRANRAER, DG9 0HY

NETS

Sunday QRS 0900 (loc) 3.575 2E0AJS

US 0100Z on 14058

Tues: G0IPX/P 1930 ON 3.558 (+/-)

Wed: US Net 0100z on 14058

Thurs: QRS 1900 (loc) on 3575. 2E0AJS

DX 14/21/28.058 on the hour for 15mins

Pse keep watch all Novice allocations

UK Net Controls use GX0IPX/P

GREETINGS

Hello people and welcome to August. The bands are as unpredictable as ever with occasional openings on 20 and, I am told, even 10m showing some signs of life. My computer friend Ernie dug up a synopsis of WX conditions for a hundred years or so and a graph plotted against temperature was coincidentally paired with one for sunspot activity and the two, he says, were seen to run in sympathy. I must borrow this sometime but I understand that we have definitely bottomed out and are on an upward slope though it could still be a year or two before we notice any real improvement.

I am still at a loss as to what we can put on for September to mark our 10th Anniversary but I applied to the RSGB for a variation permitting me to run GB0FCW. This has been confirmed and I shall be on air with it as much as possible from 3 to 30 September but unfortunately the call is not portable. Bob and I will be getting our heads together to lay out a QSL (A5- minus for preference) hoping to get a goodly supply printed prior to the event.

A distinctive award layout was called for but I was tied up and not able to set the wheels into motion as hoped so the awards for the Winter Straight Key Week were despatched on the same stock as the Century Award. Sorry to those concerned about the delay but the good news is that I have a piece of software here which is dedicated to producing all manner of seamless borders so Bob and I will be looking at some variation in the stock and also a variation in colour and layout for future awards.

It was such a close call. The landlord at the local watering hole having been called away for a couple of weeks, meant that their 'Lancashire Heeler' was going to miss his walkies so as usual, Tammy and I picked him up early evening. I had Tammy's lead in my right hand and Sam's in my left as we walked to the point where I would release them both for a little run. Just at the point where we were due to turn left to the grassed area, a panel van approached in a light stream of traffic with his left hand indicator flashing. Remember that we drive on the left and since there was no way he could legitimately turn left (particularly at the speed of the traffic flow) I took it that the indicator had gone uncanceled since it was last activated and ignored it. Suddenly, the van crept to the centre of the road and began to turn right. There was a warning blast of the horn of the vehicle behind which caused the van to accelerate whilst at the same time undertaking the turn. There was no way he could make it, this much was clear, and I judge the path to be directly to where we would have been in a few more strides. Sam was blissfully unaware (his nose was in top gear) but Tammy was lagging a little so I dropped my anchor and instinctively yanked the leads towards me. Sam rose three times

his own modest height into the air as the front wheel of the van occupied the same spot that he had been posted at a mere second before and the van ended up almost square across the pavement (sidewalk for our cousins of course). I was still trembling somewhat as the lunatic reversed into the stream of the opposing traffic, did a hard right and shot away to the South and I was soon

to give myself a mental kick since I did not have the presence of mind to catch his registration. Just wait till next time though. Hi. There is still a steady stream of members who work GX0IPX for the first time (mainly on 80m) and whilst most are knowledgeable, a fair percentage show much surprise when I call them by their own name and do not seem to recognise the call. You can't win 'em all Geo.

QSLs. Bob is still getting batches of cards unsorted. Again we must ask you to help especially since the distribution is now effectively 15% of the EU membership.

My thanks to those of you who enquired about the state of G3ZQS. All is OK thank you and the BSC seems to be reducing steadily. The last measurement threw up something in the order of 8.5 which compares to 10.6 for the previous reading. On-air observations make me a little nervous though and I have been quoted a figure of 24 plus by one member before the condition was diagnosed. Whoo! I wonder if they had to glue the top of his skull back?

BEEP BEEP

I have no idea why Nancy chose to send this via the internet as a binary file but it was worth picking up all the same:

Hi All,

I thought this was a cute one in response to those anti-CWers who are trying to coin the phrase "beepers" = a negative expression for CW people.

> "Talk is cheap, real amateurs beep" from Wilko PA3BWK

LISTINGS

As noted previously, this has run into no less than nine pages of A4 close typed with a measure of 8.5 points in a condensed mono-spaced face so you can get a good idea of the problem. We must therefore have regard to the cost of producing these taking note of the toner and stock so for a full or US only listing, I would ask you to include three 2nd class stamps - one for the return and the remainder to help offset the costs. A listing of EU only requires but 2 stamps of course and in any case, an envelope is not required since unless this is a C5, the listing is too bulky. I get the envelopes at a reasonable price and it saves me the trouble of having to stick the front of a pre-addressed stamped envelope onto a C5. A very fiddly business. Hi.

THOUGHTS FROM NY2V

I received a courtesy copy of an e-mail from Fred, NY2V to his correspondent WT3P which concerned the ARRL attitude towards licensing. I enclose herewith Fred's thoughts which could be an inspiration to many:

"There is a very basic set of rules I normally try to follow, and they are my own:

1. Stay educated. Read, read, read. Stay away from dull subjects - stick to the ones that stimulate my mind.

2. Be curious and don't give up until the answers are found.

3. Don't 'just let George do it'. Take the initiative and do what I am good at. Do not, however, volunteer if someone with less experience steps forward. Let them get the experience and offer to help. Writing a newsletter and seeking/accepting contributions to it comes to mind in my case.

4. Set the bar pretty high. On 2M find hams who are willing to talk on simplex about the news of the day, or something historic, or most anything new and having some substance to it. If snowed by a topic, dig into it off the air, and come back next time with new information.

On HF, try to stimulate conversation by asking questions of the one on the far end. People are almost always flattered when a person shows interest in them, in where they live, in what they do for pay and for fun.

5. Be careful about aggravating people... it is a built-in bad trait of mine that I have little tolerance for the perceived shortcomings of others, however trivial... and a constant temptation to open my big mouth when silence would be preferable. If angry, think about it for a day or two and then decide if pursuing the issue would benefit anyone. Hasty reactions usually do harm.

6. Keep a list of goals/projects, and never consider them impossible. Take one at a time and 'just do it'. Get help when necessary. People like to be asked for help, whether it is giving advice, or pitching in physically. Some don't, but are easily identified and one learns from that. Every time the next QCWA newsletter due date comes around, I am 90% unprepared. I just start writing the boilerplate, and lo and behold, topics come to mind when, and only when, the project is started and the deadline looms close ahead. The result is usually good. I don't worry about trying to keep everyone happy. If the majority are, that's an accomplishment. BUT, if I didn't follow rules 1, 2 and 4, I would have no material for publication...

7. Listen to my body's messages and my brain's messages. First impressions are right, more often than not. Better safe than sorry. If there are physical problems or limitations, address them. If there is worry, annoyance, boredom, sadness, depression, anger — figure out why, whether it can be stopped or helped by taking some action, and act on it. The mind controls the body, or it should. It can control it for good or for bad. Choose good if at all possible. Just don't push too hard. The body will rebel, or the brain will make regrettable decisions."

"I think the ARRL needs to 'set the bar very high'. The payoff of making entry to ham radio easier has been short-term and, in the long term, has resulted in about half the licensed hams having a problem with the choice they made. It reminds me of welfare. People on welfare stay on welfare (as a rule). People who are handed anything on a silver platter rarely appreciate what they got or have. Set the standards high, and set the example, and the right people will make the right choice. No offense to anyone on welfare. At this rate, I will be on it, in effect, as a retiree!

As a retired Army captain, and having had many widely different assignments, I found that the military taught its enlisted personnel from a syllabus that was geared for the lowest level of intelligence (partly of necessity). Officers were not taught that way — quite the opposite. Officers stayed in the service

Enlisted, as a rule, served their time and quit. The exceptions were those at the top enlisted rank, who automatically had responsibility similar to that of their COs... and who often had much more practical experience than those COs. The point of this paragraph is the enlisted who served their time and quit.

The ham radio hobby, by its very nature, appeals most to those who have the time to pursue it. That means kids during the summer or during the school year as an extracurricular activity often in lieu of sports, and senior citizens who have time on their hands. Those in between rarely have found the hobby of interest or worth the time (time they don't have) to pass tests to join. This is a fact of life in Amateur Radio. It has been modified in the past few years by the pervasive (and certainly stimulating and beneficial) presence of the computer and the door it provides to the whole world of communication, education and entertainment.

The technical requirements for being a ham have been lowered too much. The Morse code should not be viewed as a hazing ritual. It is no more so than asking those who aspire to be Extra Class hams to learn about, in my case, a whole raft of things in which I have no interest (ATV, satellite communications, repeaters, and some other subjects). I learned about them anyway, and passed the exams. So it should remain, I feel. Besides, who are we to judge what will interest us in the future, most likely due to some mental stimulation from our past?

Ham radio no longer should be described quite the way the FCC describes it in Part 97. The knowledge of the Code is no longer needed to equip us to be valuable resources in time of government need (but hams are unique in knowing and using the Morse Code, and I feel they will ultimately drop it, to their everlasting regret, if the testing is stopped.) Until the technical-knowledge bar is put back where it used to be — even though we are for the most part appliance operators — we will not provide anyone with a pool of personnel educated in the radio art.

The decision has to be made: Do we continue in the direction of making this an easy-entry personal communications service that now bugs more people than it satisfies, or do we take the high ground that we once owned? I think we must make a decision to take that high ground, and invest in it by upgrading the technical content of tests and of the material in QST. It cannot be done overnight, and hopefully is not too late. If we present the young and the old with a hobby that requires effort to join, resulting in pride in having achieved same, all will be well. At present, we are truly on a collision course with extinction, or at the very least, mediocrity.

Thanks for 'listening'.

73,
Fred Adsit, NY2V"

LOOKOUT BELOW!

Hello Geo,

Thought I'd better get in touch to prove I'm still around and to say that my subs will be with you at the end of August.

According to some of my mates down here I've got a death wish, last year I did a sponsored freefall parachute jump at Sibson airfield, Peterborough, it was a tandem jump from 13,000 ft, I enjoyed it so much I've arranged to do another one but this time a bit nearer home, Salisbury, on the 9th of August.

The charity concerned is of course guide dogs for the blind association. Pilot, my guide dog, is still doing his job perfectly, after just over 4 years with a (lunatic)?? like me.

I have been active on HF recently and am getting rid of the layer of rust that built up over 3 years of inactivity, I've found that I didn't lose any speed on rx but the tx could do with some more rust-eater.

Right then, I'll be in touch again when I eventually come doooooown to earth next month. (what's the name of that damned

red indian again ? ? ?) Hee, Hee.

73 Geo de Keith G0 KWD.

Any odd clicks heard during this period when Keith is the subject of gravitational leveling out will probably be due to his automatic orthodontic keyer. Better thee than me Geronimo.

CENTURY AWARDHOLDERS

Here is the latest list of award holders for you to hunt down. They are listed in order of call sign and it is suggested that you transcribe this list to a cardfile or other index where they can be easily checked.

EU Members:

F5JUD, G0FIP, G0FOD, G0FRL, G0FVS, G0GGU, G0HGA, G0IJE, G0ILN, G0JWB, G0LJB, G0MGD, G0NKO, G0ONS, G0SWU, G0SZE, G0TBD, G0TCF, G0TGU, G0TUE, G0UEE, G0VQA, G0WAS, G3ASG, G3GXQ, G3KEF, G3LPS, G3VQO, G3YLL, G4EIB, G4JRE, G4LHI, G4OOS, G4WBN, G4ZIB, G10PCU, GM4BAE, GW0SGG, GW0UHI, GW4PXQ, LA1IE, LY3BY, PA3AFF, PA3BJD, SP6JOE,

NA Members:

AA5EA, AA9KH, AC4DT, AC4XT, AC4ZH, AC5JH, AC6TO, AF2L, AE4AZ, AE4P, AF9H, AI9L, K3WWP, K7WF, K7ZR, KA4IFF, KA8OQF, KA8ZDL, KB2UZY, KB8KRD, KB8ZVD, KC5VJU, KC8BSC, KD1XA, KE4GBE, KF6DCU, KG8DA, KQ4VH, KS4UV, N1DNM, N1VWD, N3NY, N3PM, N3RSD, N4VEF, N5DCF, N7CFA, N8UIZ, NA8G, NP4FW, NS2G, NS2H, VA3KEW, VE1ZAC, VESRD, VY2RB, W3ERU, W3RMD, W4IUI, W4JCH, W6DDB, W8BL, W8LFI, WA0FGV, WA3WEE, WA4KQL, WA7YYY, WB2FXK

Remember that you need to work 100 of the above for your Platinum award and remember also that it is not as daunting as it may at first appear because the list grows steadily providing you with a much wider target.

LAST SUNDAY LADDER

CALL	Mbrs	Mbr Total	Non Mbrs	Prev	Total
G4LHI	20	40	2	348	390
GW0SGG	19	38	0	318	356
G0TBD	2	24	1	217	242
G4OOS	10	20	0	200	220
G0MGD	22	44	7	166	217
G0MRH	12	24	1	150	175
G4PTE	8	16	1	151	168
G0FVS	8	16	0	118	134
G4RBE	8	16	1	70	87
GW4PXQ	11	22	0	47	69
G0VBH	4	8	0	52	60
G0WAS	5	10	0	31	41
G0VCY	7	14	0	26	40
G4CBG	7	14	0	14	28
G0PEH	2	4	3	10	17
G0IFX	8	16	0	0	16
G0ATR	4	8	0	0	8

G4LHI is hanging on to that lead like Schumaker from pole position but just as with weather and tyres on the Grand Prix circuit, anything can happen. Hi. The apparent gap betwixt the top 5 places can be changed radically at the next corner. LHI will doubtless try to hang on with tenacity but astute pit stops and aggressive driving can change positions dramatically.

CENTURY AWARD

Well my goodness gracious. I have been flooded with enquiries from the hunters, most of whom appear to be in disagreement with our view that the Century has become too easy to obtain and suggesting alternative answers to this question. One point concerned the QRP category but this is easily answered because if Bob is advised accordingly, he will append QRP to the Century Award certificate. There now remains the thorny question of the confusion which still reigns throughout the ranks. I had prepared a further explanation of what we were trying to do but having had some discourse with Bob concerning multiple Century's (remember that it is now possible to obtain at least 20) and having in mind the most popular view, Bob has agreed that you may continue to claim your Century Awards as normal but the fifth such will be treated as a 'Gold' and a special award for 500 will be issued instead. Remember that you may NOT use any call more than once.

Please give us a little time to organise the printing of these (I don't see any immediate demand for the Platinum) and for those who already hold 5 Century awards, you will be advised when the new certificates are ready and Bob, who keeps a check on all such claims, will automatically forward a Gold to replace your 5th claim. The requirements are the same i.e. 1 point for working your own continent, 2 points for stations outside your own continent and 3 points for the club station GX0IPX or GX0IPX/P. We also have a number of US FISTS club stations and feel that these should also be valued at 3 points. Included in this list is the USS Requin (the submarine moored on the Ohio river in Pittsburgh) who's call is W3XX and holds the FISTS number of 1443. Not the easiest of numbers to get since operation is sporadic with limited power and a simple vertical antenna. Also another US Sub, KG6VT is QRV. Listed clubs to my current knowledge are:

WA7YYY, W3DV, KC7OUC, KB9JYN, K8KEY and KC8HUK.

Well, I hope we have cleared things up to your satisfaction. This arrangement leaves us with the option of issuing a 'Diamond' when the time comes for 1,000 points.

As previously recommended, an index of some sort would be advantageous and for those of you with computers and a dBase editor, a simple structure for a file which would keep track of all our awards would be:

CALL(C,9), DATE(D), BAND(C2), NUMBER(C,4), CENTURY(L,1), PLATINUM(L,1) and POINTS(N,3). The logical fields (L,1) contain only one character indicating True or False and the numeric (N,3) allows you to sum the column to obtain a total. The number column uses char rather than numeric since no math needs to be performed on it. This same structure of course could be used if you are employing a spread sheet to keep your data but should you lack this or an editor, a simple but functional editor is obtainable from HQ by sending a formatted 3.5 in. disc and return postage.

CHANGES

Congratulations to Jenny, MW1BJF who, having cracked the Morse Test, is henceforth recognised as MW0BET. Also to Derrick, 2E0AMK, who took an even bigger step and is now M0BDD. G7MGV, Bob, likewise takes the big step and now becomes M0BCH.

Jenny would like to express her thanks to GW3PRL for his 'unending patience' in steering herself and others through the test. There you are lass, I told you there was nothing terrifying about it. Piece of cake in fact.

SCRAP THE MORSE TEST

From John, G3SJE, an item which he wrote for the Edgware N/L urging the scrapping of the Morse Test for access to the HF bands in favour of some other meaningful requirement from which I extract a few notes:

"As a strong proponent of Morse in amateur radio, I am now convinced that as an International requirement, it is now an anachronism which is positively harmful to the amateur radio movement. It has got to go."

"In the past, Morse was a great link binding amateurs and other radio communication services, particularly the military and civil marine services. It was in the national interest to have this body of morse proficient amateurs. The link is now broken. The other services have moved on (rightly or wrongly is not an issue here - decisions will be taken on the basis that Morse is commercially dead). Amateur radio sits rooted in the past as far as HF goes. We all know the average age of hams has been rising steadily for years. When youngsters see items such as Portishead, they cannot see that the absolute need to pass a Morse test to obtain an HF licence has any relevance to an interest in radio. Still worse, it is seen as a condition to make them look to a now irrelevant past rather than an introduction to a forward looking hobby"

"I agree that the present RAE is not a sufficient test to gain HF access. Something more is needed. At present the Morse test remains not because it is relevant but because we cannot decide what conditions should be imposed internationally on HF operating. While we dither, the amateur radio movement suffers and ages into decline. Those who fight tooth and nail to retain the Morse test are only staving off the inevitable to the long term detriment to us all. The longer you hold the untenable position, the worse it is when the position collapses. If we refuse to see the anachronism, others with administrative power will not be blinkered and eventually a 'solution' will be imposed, almost certainly one which we will not like."

"Perhaps there are Morse enthusiasts who boil at the forgoing. If so, get out of your nostalgia for the bygone age and enter the real world to come. You should be working for the place for Morse in the future. It is still a most valuable mode of operation in the amateur radio context. It ought to be strongly encouraged but not made compulsory. What we ought to be considering is whether band segments should be set aside for exclusive CW use. If so, should there be a Morse test to gain access to these segments, that is, some form of advanced licence? The best way to preserve Morse is to demonstrate that it is something special in promoting proficiency and that it is still a very effective way to communication in the high-tech world we live in. There may yet come a time when the inherent simplicity of CW communication comes to our rescue as our super complex systems crash". I am sure that I will be swamped with replies to this item but before you get your "two-penworth" in, just consider what this is all about. The current cry for retaining the test is the very real fear that the whole of the HF bands will be swallowed up by the inane. FISTS is a club for people who love CW and we do not seek to lobby IARU members for the retention of the CW test. The test however is currently the only worthwhile turnstile for access to the HF bands. To remove this without replacing it with something which requires an equivalent effort would be to degrade even further the status of the hobby. My only personal concern is the continued recognition of Morse on the amateur allocations but be aware that the bulk of the pressure for the retention of the CW test does not come exclusively from FISTS members. We are in fact a very small voice in this matter and place no pressure upon our members in either direction. The US gang have a written declaration urging the ARRL to retain the test and this has received the approval of 98% of their membership but this is because there is a faction in the ARRL that is seeking to open the floodgates to all and sundry by reducing the license requirements. We are fortunate that we do not have to suffer the self declared SSB nets deep within the accepted 40m CW segment from Canada or the blanket of overdriven SSB transmission from certain Latin American countries from 3.500 upwards."

THE STRAWBERRY BASKET

GW4GCB. Our Peter has made a QSY to a location near Abergele which he describes as a 'black hole' for radio signals but we will keep our ears open for you mate. **G3KUL.** Doug's thoughts were contrary to those of his GP and a specialist and his conclusions were dismissed as 'rubbish' but after two months of tests, he has been proved correct. Could it be that lay diagnosis is superior to the professional version? **LA1IE.** You may well hear Otto referring to odd atmospheric conditions but if so, give the context some consideration because his 5th Grandchild who made an appearance on 5 June, is a girl who's parents blessed with the name Aurora. I also miss those £1.00 notes Otto. Nowadays, I get holes in my pockets due to the weight of these oncers. **Hi. G3VQO.** Les says he had a 'brief foray' into the US spring sprint but only managed a couple of contacts due to the lousy conditions. He is one of the few who agreed with Bob and I concerning points allocation for the Century. Sorry mate but we are a democratic organisation so majority rules. Bit of a linguist is our Les and his habit of yacking in French on the bands has earned him a place in UFT (number 882) and he now need only four more departments to achieve a clean sweep for DDFM but since the missing ones are all sparsely populated mountain regions, he is dependent upon the rest of you shelling out on a holiday and taking a rig along. **Hi. G4SSH.** Roy has been taking advantage of openings on 20m to the US around 0000z and was especially delighted to hook Tom, WB3JJK who is 69 years old and running just 600 mW from an argo plus solar panel. *"This is what makes CW so special, any fool can read a 5x9 SSB signal but to dig out a 339 just above the noise from a 2K+ miles and carry out an intelligent conversation, bestows a feeling of satisfaction and achievement that the voice ops just cannot understand"*. **G0FPS.** I am rather disappointed that Ray chooses to divorce himself from FISTS. He speaks of requirements for membership and *"the first is that the founder of the club should be superior to myself when it comes to sending Morse. This is undoubtedly the case. The second requirement is that the standard of written English used by the author of Keynote should be superior to mine. I am not so sure about this. In conclusion, may I add that I do not now think that opposing a code-free licence is necessarily the best option. It is a bit of a dog in the manger attitude. Surely Morse can be preserved without forcing others to learn the code. It is on it's way out as indeed may be amateur radio. The computer will soon reign supreme but I won't be around to see that"*. I do not have a degree in English and I hope Ray was not under the impression that this was so. I simply write as I think and aside from the odd colloquialism, have had very few complaints.

FINALE

I did have a photograph from the Vibroplex people illustrating their combo (mechanical keyer + pump handle all on one base) but as you can see, we are a little pressed for space so I will try to scan it for next month.

An Elmer award to GW3PRL courtesy of Jenny, MW0BET in recognition of the many hours he spent coaching her and others. A reminder here that £1.00 will cause this to be delivered to whoever you have in mind (it need not be a FISTS member) which sum covers the cost of stock, postage etc. and still leaves a wee bit for the kitty.

Hitherto, we have been using common stock for all the awards including the members certificate. Bob and I have been giving this some serious thought recently and, as a trial, Bob has purchased some very attractive bordered mid-weight material which will be used to differentiate between the various certificates. The projected cost of special QSL cards for GB0FCW has caused us to consider a straight-through colour ink-jet. Ordinarily, these machines cater only for standard 80gsm stock but the straight through version will handle at least twice this weight although the price we pay for this is hand feeding and ink. However, I look forward to doing a very special job for GB0FCW.

/88 people. Take care and stay sober

de Geo

FISTS CW Club

September 1997

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																																																																																											
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FISTS Tenth Anniversary Special Event Celebration runs from 0001Z Sept 12 until 2359 Sept 14. Get on the air es have fun!

FISTS CW CLUB, P.O. Box 47
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